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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 001880

C O R R E C T E D COPY (SUBJECT)

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL 7/30/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PINS](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: Somalia - New Rumors of Ethiopian Withdrawal

Classified by Special Envoy John Yates, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) On July 31, President Abdullahi Yusuf told Special Envoy for Somalia John Yates he suspected Ethiopia was preparing to withdraw its troops soon. According to Yusuf, Ethiopian troops, possibly as many as forty truckloads, left their bases at the former pasta factory and football stadium in Mogadishu.

¶2. (C) Ethiopian-trained Somali security forces, supported by cash contributions from Mogadishu's business community, replaced the Ethiopian troops, according to Abdisalam. Yusuf told SE Yates that, if the Ethiopians pull back before sufficient numbers of peacekeepers arrive, the Transitional Federal Government "won't survive."

¶3. (C) Comment: Ethiopia has moved their troops around piecemeal in the past, but if true, this is a significant column of troops on the move. It's unclear how far outside Mogadishu they have moved or how prepared TFG troops are to take their place. It's equally uncertain how armed groups and the public will react. End Comment.

SLUTZ